

## Journal by Mabel Hubbard Bell, June 13, 1887, with transcript

ORIGINAL COPY PLACED IN "D 2 " FOLDER Copied from the Journal of Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell, dated 1739 Rhode Island Avenue, June 13, 1887

Cablegram received from Charlie says "Grace improving fast, takes short walks daily." This is certainly delightful after the long spell of "Improving slowly" that we have had, but I must confess Grace's slow recovery is a complete upsetting of all my romantic theories of the power of Love to cure illness. I can't see why since all the physicians were agreed in saying that she had no disease and was simply suffering from nervous prostration, she should not have begun to recover rapidly from the moment that the knot was definitely tied and there was no possibility of indecision as to what was best to do. But it is only now, six weeks after the wedding that she is able to walk at all out-of-doors. The couple are at Jersey and write bright happy letters home.

Poor little Helen is having a bad time and through her my dear Mother. She has some trouble with her knee whether rheumatism or some injury to it Dr. Johnston did not decide, but either way he said the treatment was to keep the leg perfectly quiet, so he put it in splints three or four days ago. Before that the child slept very badly, frequently screaming with the pain, since then she has slept well until last night. Yesterday she suffered very much with an ulcerated tooth and had fever and then the splints came down. Mamma telephoned Doctor Johnston at eleven P. M. to know how she should manage, but late as it was he insisted on coming up himself to bandage it properly rather than have the little thing suffer. The little thing lies on the sofa all day and when not crying with pain is as bright and lovely and patient as possible. But of course Mamma will not leave her and watches by her all day.

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Alec is in Boston detained by the lawyers. The lawsuit was begun today and they wanted him to put in an appearance. He has been gone a month now, but I can hardly believe that it is only a month, it seems more like three. The house is so quiet and lonely without his. He is always the central object around which everything revolves. Where he is life never can be monotonous, or one day like another.

I have engaged our next winters home. It is 1336 — 19th St., right opposite Papa's back door. It is a delightfully small house and I am sure we shall all enjoy it immensely after living so long in these big houses. It has only one fault and that is the dark middle rooms. When the house was built a narrow passage ran along side of it, and the builder took advantage of this circumstance to open windows on it in the middle rooms. Unfortunately the passageway belonged to the next house, and the proprietor built his house over the walk right up to our house closing those windows. Otherwise the house is in perfect order looking so nice and fresh and clean. Mrs. Sears has arranged all my furniture properly in it instead of just dumping it down, and it looks lovely and very inviting already. My reception room furniture fits in admirably into the parlor, the deep blue velvet couch and chairs softening the rather strong blue of the walls. Alec was Miss True's friend Miss Hudson in Portland and his telegraphic report was "she is quite inexperienced, but we might try her," accordingly I have written offering her \$350.00 her traveling expenses and washing. I hope she will come I like what Miss Percy said of her. The children are well. I am trying hard to awaken a love of reading in Elsie and succeeding poorly, in plain words failing utterly. I have always been afraid to have her study fearing that she would become so fond of reading as to affect her health, but there does not seem to be the least danger of it now. Daisy is more willing to read a page or two when I tell her to, but that is all.

Elsie doesn't care for anything but company now, she has no resources in herself and no habit of application, she is a dreadful weight on me in consequence. I have to insist on her practicing, reading or doing anything but loaf, with her elbows ungracefully in the air. She is immensely interested in everything she sees and hears, but wants to be told, and not

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to take the trouble to find out for herself. I feel sure that her faults are mostly due to her bringing up, but how to train her into good habits now I don't know. She is affectionate and thinks she is fond of me but I doubt it is but surface fondness, and I cannot see why she should be really fond of me. It is "do this, don't do that" all the time, all day long, and I know that I oughtn't to say so, at the same time I know she must be made to do something. She is wonderfully good-natured and gentle through it all. I feel if I were in her place I should fly out many and many a time.

Uncle Theo, Cousin Annie, Theodora and Florence go to Norwich tomorrow. Their departure is hastened by the girls desire to see Barnum who is there for one day early. Florence the little Bermuda girl never having seen a circus. We shall be all very sorry to have them go. Both Theodora and Florence have been very kind to the children, and Theodora I like very much. She is a queer looking girl with her high forehead and short stumpy figure. She is about 5 feet 1 inch high and weighs 127 pounds. If she can only grow tall and thinner and dress her hair becomingly she will be a striking and handsome woman. But she is absolutely without self-consciousness or vanity, and seems to care little about her appearance.

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The family return to Bermuda in the fall remaining probably eighteen months. Lina and Augusta sail June 25th from Amsterdam for a visit home. How many changes will they find!